

CLAIMS:

1. A catheter assembly which includes:
at least one introducer, the at least one introducer defining at least one passage;
an elongate tubular member slidably received within the at least one passage of
5 the at least one introducer, the tubular member having a proximal end and a distal end
and at least one lumen extending between the proximal end and the distal end; and
an elongate, shape-imparting element received in the at least one lumen of the
tubular member, the shape-imparting element imparting a predetermined shape to the
distal end of the tubular member when the distal end of the tubular member is extended
10 beyond a distal end of the introducer, a distal end of the shape-imparting element
extending from the at least one lumen of the tubular member and being anchored
proximally a distal end of the introducer.
2. The assembly of claim 1 in which a proximal end of the shape-imparting
15 element is connectable to a control mechanism which, in use, applies torsion to the
shape-imparting element to effect adjustment of the predetermined shape of the distal
end of the tubular member.
3. The assembly of claim 1 or claim 2 in which the predetermined shape imparted
20 to the distal end of the tubular member is a loop formation.
4. The assembly of claim 3 in which the tubular member forms a cranked arm
when it is extended from its introducer, the cranked arm being arranged transversely
with respect to a longitudinal axis of the introducer and the cranked arm leading into a
25 spiral shape forming the loop formation.
5. The assembly of claim 4 in which the spiral shape circumscribes at least 360°.
6. The assembly of claim 4 in which the spiral shape circumscribes about 540°.
- 30 7. The assembly of any one of claims 4 to 6 in which the cranked arm extends
from the end of the introducer at an included angle of about, or exceeding, 90° to
facilitate the formation of a substantially planar loop formation at the distal end of the
introducer.

8. The assembly of any one of the preceding claims in which the assembly includes at least two introducers, each introducer having a tubular member associated with it.
9. The assembly of claim 8 in which a first introducer is received within a passage of a second introducer, a second tubular member, associated with the second introducer, being slidably received within a passage of the second introducer.
10. The assembly of claim 9 in which the second tubular member is carried on a shape-imparting element received within a lumen of the second tubular member so that the second tubular member is able to be formed into a second predetermined shape when the second tubular member is extended from the second introducer.
11. The assembly of claim 10 in which the shape-imparting element associated with the second tubular member extends beyond a distal end of the second tubular member.
12. The assembly of claim 11 in which a distal end of the second shape-imparting element is anchored distally with respect to the distal end of the second tubular member but proximally with respect to the distal end of the first introducer.
13. The assembly of claim 12 in which an anchor point of the first shape-imparting element is in register with an anchor point of the second shape-imparting element.
14. The assembly of claim 13 in which both anchor points are arranged on the first introducer.
15. The assembly of any one of claims 10 to 14 in which each shape-imparting element is in the form of a shape memory alloy wire.
16. A catheter assembly which includes:
at least one introducer, the at least one introducer defining a passage;
an elongate, tubular member slidably received within the passage of the at least one introducer, the tubular member having a proximal end and a distal end and a lumen extending between the proximal end and the distal end; and
an elongate, shape-imparting element received in the lumen of the tubular member, a distal end of the shape-imparting element extending beyond a distal end of the tubular member and being anchored proximally a distal end of the introducer, the

- arrangement being such that, when a distal portion of the tubular member is extended beyond the distal end of the introducer, the shape-imparting element imparts, to the distal portion of the tubular member, a cranked arm portion extending transversely relative to a longitudinal axis of the introducer and a loop formation supported on the
- 5 arm portion so that torsion imparted to a proximal end of the shape-imparting element causes rotation of the arm portion about the longitudinal axis of the introducer to effect adjustment of a diameter of the loop formation of the distal portion of the tubular member.